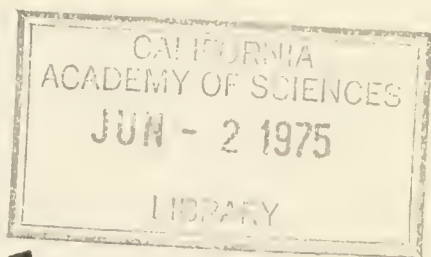


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# the gull

Volume 57

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June 1975

Number 6

## From Your President's Stockpile

### A FAREWELL



As my two year term as president comes to a close I can report with satisfaction that the affairs of the Society are in excellent shape. They are being passed on to a strong Board which has already indicated by the manner in which it is organizing that it is prepared to grapple with our size and to turn it to the positive advantage of the Society.

Approximately half the current Board members will continue to serve on the new Board providing needed continuity. The remaining slots will be filled by "new blood" as insured by our recently revised

Constitution and Bylaws which restrict length of service on the Board. The current Standing Rules of the Society set up a carefully defined time schedule to be followed as we move from one administration to the next. Strict adherence to these guide lines by the Nominating Committee and by both current and incoming Board account for the very smooth transition which is being effected. With the installation of officers and directors on June 12, the new Board will be ready to function.

In keeping with the thrust of that folk song "Please Give me My Flowers While I'm Living" I have at regular intervals used this column to say "thank-you" to Board members and others who have given special help

to GGAS. I hope many of these friends will find it possible to join us at our June 12 dinner so that you can meet them. In this issue I would like to focus on the overall picture of the past two years and on individuals to whom I have not yet said "well done."

While necessary increases in NAS dues this fall and the worsening economic situation have led to a high membership drop-out rate nationwide, our membership has grown to approximately 5000 and we currently stand as the largest chapter in the country. Birding is one of the magnets which draws members to Audubon rather than to other conservation-oriented organizations and our chapter offered a mouth-watering array of approximately 90 field trips this year under the direction of Pat Triggs. In addition, Carlos Jordan and Ruth Voss led approximately 12 field trips for beginners and Pete White scheduled 4 pelagic trips.

Some of the pressures were taken off these trips by Northern California Rare Bird Alert which sent many advanced birders off on their own treasure hunt. The taped telephone alert has added zest to the birding activities of Audubon members up and down the Coast.

The Christmas count with its 257 participants brought out the year's largest turn-out of members as well as a large percentage of top Northern California birders again insuring (as we did also in the 1973 count) that the Oakland count was "the most thoroughly covered circle in the world." A thoroughly professional job was done by the team responsible for the organization and compilation — Stephen Bailey, Van Remsen, John Luther and Inez Troxell.

In the *May Gull* we noted the valuable contributions of our conservation chairman and the *Hot Line* editors. A strong new addition to the Board, professional environmentalist Tom Williams, is concerned primarily with the saving of marsh lands. This view has been reflected in periodic columns in the *Gull* entitled "Birds Eye View of the Bay." He has led field trips to Point Molate, Point Pinole and the Stauffer marsh, and made presentations to our Board and to BAAC concerning specific East Bay marsh lands which he hopes can be pulled into the public domain through the efforts of GGAS and other conservation organizations.

This board was charged with the task of setting up a financially viable educational program, a charge which has been met through a mutualistic relationship with Albany Adult School and its principal Mr. Lawrence Hughes. At our request five courses, running nine weeks each and focusing on various aspects of the natural history of the Bay Area have been offered since September. These GGAS-initiated courses, plus one on indoor gardening, drew a total of 270 students. Jim Clayton will be continuing as education chairman and a summer program will be offered.

During the eighteen months we have been housed in our current office, it has taken shape as a pleasant, well organized center for GGAS activities. Lenore Johnson, our corresponding secretary, worked closely with Vera Paraschak, our office manager and the only paid employee of GGAS, during her early months on the job. Vera is now fully in command of the situation and is doing an outstanding job of fielding a continuous barrage of phone calls, handling office visitors, turning out the usual typing and mimeographing, keeping atop the monthly membership print-outs from NAS and she has grown tremendously in her knowledge of environmental problems. Her services are invaluable.

Over the past few years, S. S. Whitehead "Whitey" has channeled approximately \$300.00 into the GGAS coffers in the form of checks presented to him as honoraria for his slide show presentations, two of which have been shown at our general meetings. His generosity is exceeded only by his skill as a photographer and narrator.

Concern for the survival of the chapter forced this Board to spend a very large part of its energies on financial matters. The finance committee prepared our past two yearly budgets and screened unbudgeted requests prior to their presentation to the Board. They instigated a yearly CPA audit of our books, established exact accounting procedures for all individuals involved in expending money for our various activities, and established a pattern of fiscal responsibility. The erosion of our limited capital has been stemmed and we are now living within a tight but balanced budget. Interest from a recent bequest from Miss Marjorie Atkinson will provide some additional income over and beyond our membership fees to help fund our programs. Special thanks are due to our treasurer Bob Johnsen for his detailed and complete monthly financial reports and his prompt payment of chapter obligations as well as his ready availability to the finance committee as a consultant. Our finance committee, including members Barry Spitz, Pete White, Bud Henning, Mrs. Hubert Fry and its chairman Len Machlis, has, over the past two years, spent hundreds of hours on all aspects of GGAS financing in their successful efforts to cut costs and to bring financial order and stability to the chapter.

Our *Gull* officially took flight in January 1919 after being set up by a Boy Scout on a toy press under the supervision of our first president C. B. Lastreto. In its second issue in February 1919 it bore a logo almost identical with the one atop the current *Gull* but bearing the name Audubon Association of the Pacific. The dimensions remained constant and the format changed little until the fall of 1974 when Phila Witherell introduced a redesigned masthead, logo drawn in pen and ink by Harry Adamson to accompany the columns of regular contributors, and expanded the Bay Area Birds Column which is under the supervision of Assistant Editor Nick Story. Phila will be among those leaving the Board



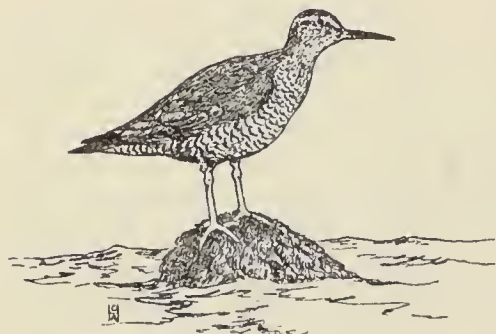
but the publication she has built is considered by many to be one of the most readable Audubon chapter publications in the country.

And so I close this column with a "thank-you" for the opportunity you have given me to serve as your president. This has been an excellent Board and looking back on the past two years I think we can all recognize that hard work, careful organization, cooperation among us and a firm commitment to doing what was best for the Society has produced significant gains for GGAS.

—G. R. MACHLIS, *President*

## Bay Area Birds

### FIELD TRIPS FOR JUNE THROUGH AUGUST



#### June 7, Saturday

Meet at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, at the end of Mesa Rd. northwest of Bolinas, at 8:00 a.m. Bring lunch in a knapsack and be prepared to walk four miles (round trip) on a steep trail to a Douglas-Fir forest, where we will learn bird calls and territorial songs and hunt for nests. Leader: Ellery Akers (387-5370).

#### June 15, Sunday

Alum Rock Park, in the hills east of San Jose. Approach via U.S. 101, exit at Alum Rock Ave. and drive about 5 miles to the entrance. Do not go through, but make a left curve; in a few yards is a large parking area overlooking the picnic grounds. Meet at 8:00 a.m.; look for orioles while waiting for the group to gather. It will be easy walking through oak and sycamore. Bring lunch. Leader: Pete Allen (781-0148).

#### June 18, Wednesday

Mini-trip for seniors. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at UC Botanical Garden in Berkeley. Drivers take Rimway around the football stadium, then up Strawberry Canyon via Centennial Dr. to the garden entrance. Non-drivers can take Humphrey Go-Bart (free shuttle bus) from the Berkeley BART station, Center St. and Shattuck Ave., at 9:00 a.m. Lunch optional. Organizers: Eleanor Peterson (647-2517) and Hap Fraser.

#### June 22, Sunday

North slope of Mt. Tamalpais. A fast-moving 5-mile walk through a variety of habitats—marsh, meadow, woods and lakes. Meet in the park-

ing lot in the center of the town of Fairfax; caravan will leave there promptly at 7:45 a.m. Bring lunch in a knapsack. Leader to be announced.

### **June 28 & 29, Saturday & Sunday**

Yuba Pass. NOTE CHANGE OF DATE. A camping trip to enjoy the birds of the Sierra Nevada. Take Interstate 80 to Truckee, turn north on Calif. 89 and drive about 25 miles to Sierraville. Take Calif. 49 west to Yuba Pass summit, where the group will gather at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday. You can also come via Auburn, Grass Valley and Downieville on Hwy. 49. We will camp at Chapman Creek Campground on Hwy. 49, eight miles west of the summit. If it is closed due to snow conditions, we will move to Cottonwood Creek Campground, on Hwy. 89 three miles south of Sierraville. If you prefer a motel, try Canyon Ranch (916-994-3340) in Sierraville, or Sierra Chalet (916-289-3483), Buttes Motel (916-862-1170, or Herrington Sierra Pines (916-862-1151), all in Sierra City. On Sunday we will meet in Sierraville at the intersection of 49 and 89 (near a lumber yard) at 7:00 a.m. Leaders: Bruce Schatzman (334-0467), Tom Harvey (522-6222), Beth Snyder (814-1747), and Dixie Sperling.

**No-leader trips:** June 11, Tilden Park, meet at Little Farm at 9:00 a.m. June 25, Golden Gate Park, meet at Chain of Lakes, 43rd and Fulton, at 9:00 a.m. Choose your own leader. Lunch optional.

**July—no scheduled trips.**

### **August 3, Sunday**

Año Nuevo, to see Black Swifts and Elephant Seals. Meet in the large parking area at the intersection of Hwy. 1 and Pescadero Rd. at 9:00 a.m. We will bird at Pescadero Marsh, Pigeon Point, and Año Nuevo Point. Bring lunch. Leader: Ted Chandik (493-5330).

### **August 13, Wednesday**

Mini-walk for seniors to Mountain Lake in the Presidio of San Francisco. Meet at Funston and Lake St. at 9:30 a.m.; accessible by 10 and 21 bus lines. Lunch optional. Leader: Eleanor Peterson (647-2517).

### **August 15, 16 & 17, Friday, Saturday & Sunday**

A combination camping and motel trip by charter bus to see condors. Bus will leave Grove and Larkin, in front of S.F. Civic Auditorium, at 6:00 p.m. Second loading in Oakland, at the Alco Park Garage, 12th and Jackson, at 6:30 p.m. Eat dinner at home or on the bus. First stop at Buttonwillow at about 10:00 p.m. Bus fare will be \$17.00. Make reservations, preferably by mail, with Pat Triggs (on vacation May 25 to June 9) at 2038 33rd Ave., San Francisco 94116, phone 664-8502. Send check payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society, include telephone number and state whether staying at motel or camping. No refunds after Aug. 12

unless a replacement is available. Motel people make reservations with Caravan Motor Inn, Gorman, for Friday and Saturday nights; singles \$16.96, two-bed \$19.08 each night. Bring picnic lunches. Breakfast and dinner at motel. Campers on bus will stay at K.O.A. campground in Lebec on Friday night, for \$3.50 each, and at McGill Campground on Mt. Piños on Saturday night. Space has been reserved. Be prepared to carry your camping gear a short distance—the bus cannot enter the campground. It could be cold (elevation 8,000 ft.) Private cars drive via Interstate 5, turn right at Frazier Park exit and drive to the top of Mt. Piños. The McGill Campground is three-quarters of the way up. Campers arrive on a first-come, first-served basis—there are no reservations. Saturday's meeting place will be at the large parking area at the top of Mt. Piños at 8:00 a.m. Be prepared to walk 3 miles round trip. Sunday meeting place to be announced. Return trip about 9:00 p.m. Organizer: Pat Triggs. Leader: Pete Allen (781-0148).

**No-leader trips:** **August 6**, Tilden Park, meet at Little Farm at 9:00 a.m. **August 27**, Golden Gate Park, meet at Chain of Lakes, 43rd and Fulton at 9:00 a.m.

## APRIL OBSERVATIONS

Observers agreed that migration was quite late this spring, as much as two weeks or more behind for some species. Although some birds (Orange-crowned Warbler, Warbling Vireo) were on time, most, including Wilson's Warbler, Swainson's Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeak, and especially the Flycatchers, were quite late. Large numbers of migrants were moving through the area on the last two weekends of April, the earlier one bringing good showings of Nashville Warblers and the latter with Hermit Warblers and up to 10 Calliope Hummingbirds in Tilden Park. Reports of some of the more uncommon migrants are found in the discussion below.

A single **Manx Shearwater** was well described in a large movement of shearwaters seen from Pigeon Point, San Mateo Co., May 1 (BS); though considered a vagrant in the spring in our area, the possibility that it is a rare but regular spring migrant has been raised. An **Ashy Storm-Petrel** was seen near the Farallon Islands Apr. 27 (SFB *et al.*); the species nests there though it is rarely observed at sea in the spring. A high count of 1000 **White Pelicans** was made at Los Banos NWR Apr. 27 (DRu). A **Green Heron** was at Coyote Hills May 2 (JS); they are scarce around the Bay. 3 **Cattle Egrets** were along Gun Club Rd., Merced Co. Apr. 27 (DRu). Two **Black Brant** at the Alameda South Shore Apr. 17-May 4 (RD, ER, JR, *et al.*) may summer locally; they are quite uncommon inside the Bay. A flock of ten more at Año Nuevo May 4 was also late for migrants (DR, TT,



JT). 2 **Fulvons Tree Ducks** were found along Henry Miller Rd., Merced Co. Apr. 27 (DRu). A **European Wigeon** in Golden Gate Park Apr. 6 (DD) was a bit late for this species. 2 **Harlequin Ducks** at Año Nuevo Apr. 3 (BS, PM) may represent a decrease in the regular flock there, for none could be found in early May. A pair of **Common Mergansers** in Sumol Regional Park were late for this bird in the coastal ranges (GP). Also late was a sighting of a **Bald Eagle** near Middletown, Lake Co. Apr. 21 (CS, GC). A **Common Gallinule** in Golden Gate Park Apr. 30 (FN, EP, HF) was away from its usual haunts. High counts of 40 **Surfbirds** and 250 **Red Knots** were made at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza Apr. 25 (RD), and a **Wandering Tattler**, rare inside the Bay, was there May 1 (JM). Very unusual was the sighting of an adult **Laughing Gull** at the mouth of the Pajaro River Apr. 25 (RW). 3 **Common Terns** were reported from Alameda South Shore Apr. 26 (DD) and 7 were identified from Pigeon Point May 1 (BS); they are regular in small numbers during this period. Six **Least Terns** returned to the Alameda South Shore Apr. 23 (TH) and three reached the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza Apr. 25 (RD), however, one off Pigeon Point May 2 was away from its known areas (BS, PM). Single **Black Terns** were at the mouth of the Pajaro River Apr. 24 - May 4 (RW, RC) and at the Alameda South Shore Apr. 28 (TH). 37 **Marbled Murrelets** were counted at their most reliable spot in our area, Pigeon Point, on May 2 (BS, PM). A **Black-chinned Hummingbird** in Oakland Apr. 22 (PP) was out of range. **Western Kingbirds** are quite scarce along the outer coast, but one was found near San Gregorio Apr. 23 (JM, RD). A **Hammond's Flycatcher** was observed at Henry Coe State Park May 3-4 (JM) and single **Gray Flycatchers** were identified at Tilden Park Apr. 30 (JM) and Coyote Hills May 4 (JL): all species of the Hammond's-Dusky-Gray complex are migrants in very small numbers through our area in spring. A **Townsend's Solitaire**, uncommon in our area, was seen Apr. 6 on Mt. Diablo (PG). A **Palm Warbler** was observed at Gualala, Mendocino Co., Apr. 12 (GP). A male **Yellow-headed Blackbird**, casual away from the Valley, was in Newark Apr. 21-24 (EM, PG, JL). A male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was found near Aptos, Santa Cruz Co. March 23 (TS, DE) and another was reported from Boulder Creek Apr. 29-May 4 (THm). A pair of **Grasshopper Sparrows** was near Pescadero Apr. 11 and by May 2, four males were singing from the adjacent hillsides (BS, PM *et al.*). Two **Sage Sparrows** were reported at Coyote Hills May 2 (JS), away from their usual habitat. The two wintering **Harris' Sparrows** in Berkeley were still present Apr. 30 (DP, CG); one was in full breeding plumage. A **White-throated Sparrow** visited a feeder in Montclair Apr. 16-26 (DW); this is still within normal dates for this uncommon winterer.

*Observers:* Stephen F. Bailey, Ron Calabrese, Glen Clifton, Rich DeCoster, Donna Dittmann, Dick Erickson, Harriet Fraser, Clark Gleason, Phil Gordon, Tom Hammer (THm), Tom Harvey (TH), John Luther, Eugene Makishima, Pete Metropulos, Joe Morlan, Fred Nora, Eleanor Peterson, George Peyton, Paco Prieto, Dee Pruyn, Jolee Roberson, Elsie

Roemer, Dave Rudholm (DRu), Barry Sauppe, Jim Scarf, Tom Schulenberg, Wally Sumner, Joanne Taylor, Terry Taylor, Ricky Warriner, Dolores White.

DON ROBERSON (DR), *Observations Editor*  
1728 Berkeley Way #5, Berkeley, Ca 94703 (841-1763)

## ANNUAL JUNE DINNER

Don't miss the annual June dinner which will be held Thursday, June 12 at 6:00 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, Franklin and Geary Streets, San Francisco.

The committee, headed by Marty Scherf, Agnes Oczkewecy and Bonnie Smith and aided by a score of able volunteers, is planning the dinner with an eye to keeping the price down to \$4.00 per person.

The dinner program will feature Mr. Paul Kelly, the natural history teachers who has helped make the Albany Adult School classes so successful. His subject, "The Natural History of the Islands of the Gulf of California" will be illustrated by his beautiful slides taken on his April trip.

Send your reservation check to Martha Scherf, 754 3rd Avenue, San Francisco 94118. Reservations are by mail only with June 9 the deadline. After June 9, emergency telephone calls can be made to Marty at 751-8349.

## SUMMER CLASSES AT ALBANY ADULT SCHOOL

The natural history classes co-sponsored by GGAS and Albany Adult School will continue with two summer courses.

The courses are:

"California Plant Communities" with Bill Brophy, botanist with the Oakland Museum. Mondays, 6:45-9:45 p.m. First meeting, June 23. The class will include slides and two field trips, probably to Mt. Diablo and Mt. Hamilton.

"The Field Natural History of the East Bay" with Peter Ourosoof, naturalist at the Tilden Park Nature Area. The first class will meet at Albany High School Wednesday, June 25 at 6:30 p.m.

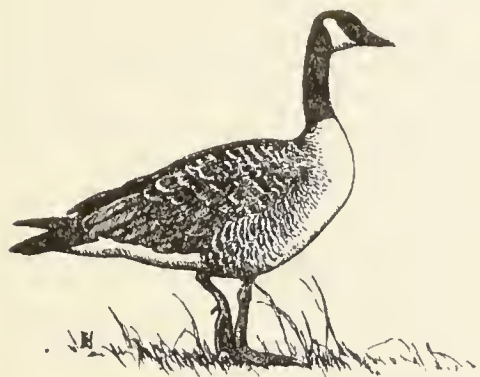
The following meetings will be in the late afternoon or early evening with time spent on the UC campus and at the Regional Parks.

Registration is at the first class meeting. Summer session dates are June 23 through August 2.

—JAMES CLAYTON, *Education Chairman*



## Covel's Conservation Corner



NEWS FROM THE SOUTH-LAND: My recent tour convinced me that Audubon is big in Southern California. When you are in San Diego be sure to visit (Wednesdays or weekends) Silverwood Audubon Sanctuary, situated amid oaks and chaparral in the hills near Lakeside. Like our Audubon Canyon Ranch it started from scratch and though more modest, it is an enormously influential center. Following an outbreak of ra-

bies in the county some time ago, San Diego Audubonites and sympathizers managed to arrest what might have become a total elimination campaign against skunks, foxes, and probably other mammalian predators.

In Orange County, the wilderness of National Audubon's new Starr Ranch lies a few miles east of El Toro with its terrifying proliferation of new subdivisions. The ranch represents a masterful rescue of precious foothill lands from the developers. Also significant are the presence of a county wilderness park and the Cleveland National Forest on its boundaries. Norm and Bev MacIntosh, known to many GGAS members as former Richardson Bay Sanctuary managers, have a most challenging job with this huge refuge. At present, it is open to Audubon members by appointment only. A few miles away, in Modjeska Canyon, is the long-established Tucker Sanctuary operated by Whittier College (open to the public 7-days weekly).

Although not an Audubon project, the reclaimed sewage lakes at Santee, near San Diego, are certainly "for the birds" as they offer hospitality to waterfowl during the fall and winter. On an April Sunday afternoon, hundreds of San Diegans were boating, fishing and picnicking along the tree-shaded shores. Such use of now-wasted sewage waters could mean recreation, wildlife and profit for many cities in the more arid parts of California and the West. Why aren't more communities following the example of little Santee? And why not also use reclaimed sewage for irrigating new farm lands?

SOLID WASTES: Turning to a related subject — why do we keep dragging our feet on solutions to the growing problems of our prodigious, menacing mountains of solid wastes? Our press and periodicals spread

before us the achievements of progressive communities which have successfully tackled solid waste recycling. Nashville, Tennessee was recently described in the environmental magazine, *Catalyst* (Vol. 1v, No. 4). Nashville's thermal operation, which began delivery of steam in February 1974, earned \$1.6 million in the first year and will soon heat and cool over forty private and government buildings. Meanwhile, our California commission charged with obtaining solid-waste recycling plans from all counties has now heard from all but one small Sierra county and — you guessed it — San Francisco. At last report, our Golden Gate neighbor was negotiating for priveleges at the Richmond dump site.

**GOOD NEWS:** Standard Oil has announced abandonment of its Estero Bay oil unloading facility. They gave "market uncertainties" as their reason. A disturbing thought — without Alaska oil to power us, will our P.G.&E. friends step up plans for nuclear power plants?

**A PERSONAL MESSAGE:** This is my last column for awhile as I leave office as conservation chairman. However I anticipate other opportunities to serve GGAS people. The experience has been gratifying to me and, I hope, stimulating to you. Please be as encouraging and loyal to my successor — and ACT when urged to do so.

—PAUL COVEL, *Conservation Chairman*

## BIRDING LECTURE SERIES

Learn to see birds with a more critical eye. Sharpen your powers of observation. Castro Valley Adult School is sponsoring a lecture series on birding by Joe Morlan, editor of our Northern California Rare Bird Alert. This series, stressing field techniques, will consist of four lectures on Tuesday evenings from 7-10 P.M., June 10-July 15 at the Castro Valley Adult School on Redwood Road in Castro Valley. Admission is free. Everyone is welcome.

## BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE BAY

The excellent attendance on field trips and in the Audubon night classes at Albany Adult School auger well for conservation of San Francisco Bay.

For example, fifty people visited Point Molate on a field trip May 24. The Navy has recognized the wildlife and recreation potentials of the Point. GGAS has requested permission to conduct wildlife and plant surveys of the federal lands during the summer months. Because of the fire danger we will be restricted to 5-6 persons. Anyone wishing to participate in such surveys (2-6 hours long) should call or write me. These surveys will provide information such as maps, trails, bird and plant

lists etc., for field trips this fall after the first rains. For fire safety and security reasons, please do not leave the public access through the Point, or future trips for GGAS might be denied.

The Whittell Acquisition Committee of GGAS will conduct field trips on July 20 and August 10 to the marshes recommended for acquisition by GGAS. The trips will familiarize the general membership with these "close-in" nature areas. Each trip will visit five areas between Oakland and San Pablo and will take about three hours, although people may leave sooner. An inventory of plants and wildlife will be taken during the trips. Suggestions and comments regarding the area are welcome. We are also looking for volunteers to assist with the project. It is our hope that the eventual acquisition would be the product of GGAS or NÁS efforts.

From these and other field trips, fact sheets will be prepared and distributed in the *Gull* sometime during the winter or spring. We would also welcome any advice on the legal aspects of land acquisition. We hope to develop a large series of slides and black-and-white photos of each area. We would appreciate, for copying, any good slides or prints of birdlife at the marshes and mudflats from the Bay Toll Plaza crossing to Point Pinole Park. Please call me if you are interested in joining the Acquisition Committee or if you have a suggestion for further acquisition in western Contra Costa or northern Alameda Counties.

Other Bay Views: The City of Albany has closed their "sanitary landfill" and is planning for the future land use of the fill. Of considerable importance will be the land use along the shoreline areas of the Hoffman Mudflat ("Albany Slough") just north of the Golden Gate Fields. A preliminary proposal will be to construct and manage a small nature center on the area near the mudflats.

Hopefully, such use would include some protection of the shoreline areas and mudflats from congregations of large numbers of persons. The mudflats are used by more than 5000 shorebirds during the winter.

Unfortunately the closure of the Albany landfill has increased the filling of the remaining Berkeley and Richmond landfills. A proposal by David Amme (April 1975) to Berkeley's Waterfront Advisory Board would convert the present landfill into the core of North Marina Park, a proposed area of native California plant communities with a large playing field protected from the Bay winds by Torrey pines.

For GGAS, the plan includes a small lagoon at the north end of the park with suitable water to maintain cord grass and other marsh plants. The lagoon and its birds would be protected by fencing and a screening of native coastal chaparral. Such a lagoon would represent the only "marshland" in Berkeley, except for the south end of Aquatic Park. How-



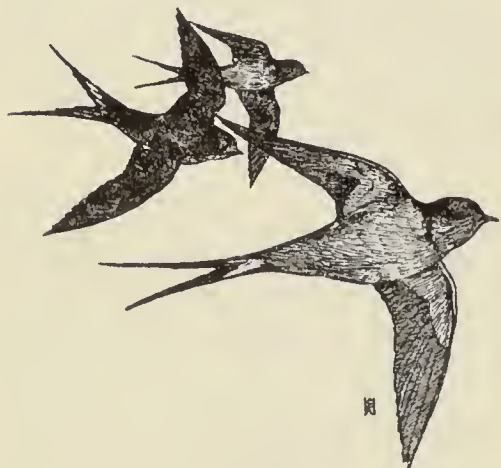
ever, the increased rate of dumping may jeopardize the lagoon by filling it before the Waterfront Advisory Board can decide which architect they will have tell them what is the best plan.

GGAS members in San Francisco will be dismayed over the loss of the old garden at Hyde and Lombard Streets with its cypress grove which shelters birds and monarch butterflies. A proposed condominium will eventually be built over this historic remnant. The Planning Commission denied the staff's recommendation for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. The Commission then took the project under discretionary review requiring the project to be built in accordance with the wishes of the Planning Commission.

—TOM WILLIAMS, *Environmental Chairman*

## Editor's Comment

### THE SUMMER SOLSTICE



June is a significant month in the Bay Area year as it marks the end of the rainy season and the beginning of the dry season. The Pacific High has moved north with the sun to its summer position 1000 miles offshore. Storms still form in the Gulf of Alaska but now they are deflected northward. Westerly winds racing toward the coast pass over cold, upwelled waters and condense into fog. The fog breaks in great combers over the coastal hills and flows through the Golden Gate.

Green hills are turning brown and the early spring wildflowers have finished blooming. For most native plants it is the beginning of a long dormancy. The time of flowering and new growth is past; now is the season for ripening fruits and berries.

Live oaks, cottonwoods, and alders have shed their catkins, and their spring-green foliage is maturing into the somber, darker greens of mid-summer. By July, the big palmtae leaves of the buckeye will shrivel and fall leaving a skeleton of gray branches to confront the rainless sky.

Insects proliferate in the warmth. Butterflies drift through gardens and at night lacewings and moths crowd window screens. The beautiful banded argiope rests in the center of her web waiting for the vibrations that mean an entrapped victim.

Tree frogs become silent as they leave the shrinking vernal ponds. Crickets take up the chorus in the dry grass. Moist-skinned salamanders have retreated to the shelter of logs and rocks, while lizards bask in the sun or scurry noisily through dry weeds.

Deer, foxes, raccoons, and skunks have brought forth their young. Spotted fawns lie concealed in dappled shade or follow their mothers on spindly legs. By summer's end their spots will have faded.

The sun has moved into Taurus and is setting now behind the Marin Hills. Venus and Saturn share the evening sky along with the two brightest stars in the constellation Gemini. June 22 is the date of the summer solstice, the longest day of the year and the official beginning of summer.

Mudflats and marshes seem empty since the wintering shorebirds and waterfowl have departed for their northern breeding grounds. But where there are cattails, nesting red-winged blackbirds bring life with their quasi-musical song and their flashing red epaulets.

Birdsong is reaching its height in June. The eloquent phrases of the black-headed grosbeak can be heard in most coastal canyons and the thrasher's song ripples across chaparral covered slopes. Mockingbirds, linnets, and robins sing in city gardens.

By mid-summer, nesting season ends and birdsong diminishes. The single, crisp call note of the Swainson's thrush replaces its ascendant song. Finches flock to feed on ripening thistle and dandelion seeds. Seasonal streams dry up; and summer wildflowers, like the spring flowers, retreat underground to seed and tuber. The natural world rests, quiet and introverted, to await a new life cycle that will begin with the first fall rains.

—PHILA WITHERELL, *Editor*

## HAPPENINGS

**OAKLAND MUSEUM:** Bill Brophy of the California Native Plants Society will offer a slide-music presentation of Great Basin Plant Communities including the bristle cone pine. Friday, June 6, at 8:00 p.m.

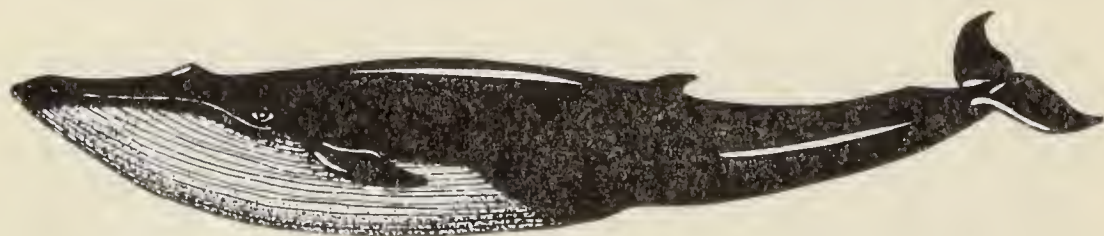
**BODEGA INSTITUTE:** The Institute is again offering a series of environmental and natural history courses for this spring and summer. The Institute is a non-profit organization of scientists engaged in environmental research and education. A variety of courses in many environments are scheduled for single days, week-ends, and extended expeditions. Among the courses being offered: The Ocean (June 19-22; August 3-9) - marine ecology in the Channel Islands aboard a sailing ship. Seashore at Lowtide (June 19) - Profile of Intertidal Zonation (June 11), Ebb Tide (July 12) - Intertidal Biology along the Sonoma Coast. Salmon River Wilderness (June 23-July 2) - a raft run to explore the geology and natural history of an Idaho Wilderness, Montane Meadows (July 20-26) - a look at meadows, forests, and wildflowers in northern Yosemite. For further information write: Bodega Bay Institute, P.O. Box 640-D, Bodega Bay, CA 94923 or call (415) 254-8519.

POINT REYES BIRD OBSERVATORY is offering several summertime natural excursions. They are: Natural History of Point Reyes (June 9-13) - a backpacking trip in the National Seashore with the emphasize on birds and ecology. Transect of California (June 22-27) - a 6-day camping transect to observe native flora and fauna from Mono Lake to Monterey. East of the Sierra (July 13-18) - geology, botany, and birds of the high east side of Central California from the White Mountains to Tioga Pass. Stanislaus River - Flow of Life (July 26-31) - a natural history transect from the central valley up the west slope of the Sierra to the east side. Bird trips to see areas in Mexico are planned for November and December. For more information write Meryl Stewart, P.O. Box 442, Bolinas, CA 94924.

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco is sponsoring a day-long program on whales, dolphins and porpoises on Sunday, June 1st. Among the outstanding speakers will be Scott McVay, Member of the United States delegation to the International Whaling Commission, whose subject will be "Man and Artic Whales"; Victor B. Scheffer, Chairman of the Marine Mammal Commission, author "Year of the Whale" whose subject will be "The Status of Whales." After a lunch break, Kenneth Norris, author "Porpoise Watcher," will talk about the tuna-porpoise problem. The afternoon will close with a panel discussion and Richard Gutting, regional council for the Environmental Defense Fund, bringing the story up-to-date on current legislation.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. at the Morrison Auditorium. General admission: \$20; \$15 for Academy members and students.

## What If The Whales Are All Gone



## Before We Become Friends?

*—Drawing and words by Bronwen Taylor*



1976 SOUTH AMERICA — GALAPAGOS TRIP

The itinerary for the 1976 Golden Gate Audubon nature tour to Colombia, Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands should be ready sometime during June. The trip will be led by George Peyton during March-April 1976, and will feature an optional trip to the Amazon headwaters guided by Van Remsen, who is doing ornithological studies on Monkey Island in the Amazon.

Anyone interested in receiving the itinerary when it is completed should write Seimer and Hand, Ltd., One Embarcadero Center, San Francisco, CA 94111 or call (415) 788-7186.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

For Audubon Canyon Ranch

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Gift of:</i>
Paul W. Wood .....	Margaret Macormack
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For GGAS

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The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor or in memeoray of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor, or if unspecified, at the discretion of the Board. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a co-sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. to Mrs. Robert C. Johnsen, Corresponding Secretary, 4 Del Valle, Orinda, CA 94563. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations, and bequests will be acknowledged in the GULL as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Corresponding Secretary.



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.

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Berkeley, California 94705

2718 Telegraph Avenue, #206

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2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705. It will be forwarded.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward the GULL. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$15 per year (individual); \$18 (family); includes AUDUBON Magazine and the GULL; to join, make checks (no cash) payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving the GULL. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to the GULL separately \$3 per year; single issues 30¢. High school and college student membership \$7 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc., was established January 25, 1917 and became a chapter of National Audubon Society in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.